

PATENT

Atty. Dkt. No. ATT/2003-0189

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

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1. - 5. (Canceled)

6. (Previously Presented) An arrangement for indicating a status of a target to an entity that attempts to communicate with the target, the arrangement comprising:

at least one sensing device configured to provide sensing information concerning the target's status in response to an action of the target with respect to the sensing device, wherein the target includes a person;

a monitoring device, configured to receive the sensing information from the at least one sensing device, and to govern communication to the entity of the target's status, the status describing at least the target's present and future ability to communicate with the entity, wherein the status includes an indication of whether the person is present or absent;

wherein the monitoring device includes a qualifying portion configured to consult an index that associates entity identifiers with an authorization level of corresponding entities, and to qualify the communication of the target's status to the entity based on the indicated authorization level of the entity;

wherein a given sensing device is dedicated to only providing the sensing information to the monitoring device; and

wherein the person must explicitly perform a presence-related action in order to cause the given sensing device to provide the sensing information.

7. (Original) The arrangement of Claim 6, wherein the given sensing device is a person-operated device requiring an explicitly presence-related action to be performed by a person in order to provide the sensing information, the person-operated device being from a group including:

a touch-screen;

a push-button; and

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a keyboard.

8. - 11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously Presented) A method of indicating a status of a target to an entity that attempts to communicate with the target, the method comprising:

automatically providing sensing information concerning the target's status in response to an action of the target with respect to a sensing device, wherein the target includes a person;

based on the sensing information from the at least one sensing device, governing communication to the entity of the target's status, the status describing at least the target's present and future ability to communicate with the entity, wherein the status includes an indication of whether the person is present or absent;

consulting an index that associates entity identifiers with an authorization level of corresponding entities;

qualifying the communication of the target's status to the entity based on the indicated authorization level of the entity;

wherein a given sensing device is dedicated to only providing the sensing information to the monitoring device; and

the providing step includes providing the sensing information in response to an explicitly presence-related action that the person must perform in order to cause the given sensing device to provide the sensing information.

13. - 20. (Canceled)